

Excursus on Apocryphal books

Just a note on each.

1 Esdras (3 Esdras in the Vulgate)..written apparently after 165 BC..recaps the history of Israel from Josiah onward. A fascinating element is found in 3:1-5:6.

2 Esdras (4 Esdras in Vulgate)..the angel Uriel announces judgment events for the end of the age. Apocalyptic.

Tobit, in the 2nd century BC, an account of events in the life of a pious Jew..fascinating reading.

Judith..hard to date but an heroic account of a Jewish maiden committed to her God and her people. It is the stuff of which great legends are made.

Additions to Esther..107 verses added to the Esther narrative giving more details and frequently mentioning the divine name.

Wisdom of Solomon...an elaboration of ideas from Proverbs, et al, attributed to Solomon..wisdom is the early theme.

Ecclesiasticus...the only book with a designated author, it is written in the last half of the 2nd century BC and is a book of worshipful psalms and sayings.

Baruch..maybe about 60 BC speaking well of Zion and the Letter of Jeremiah, perhaps about the same time, denouncing idolatry:

Daniel Additions: Song of the Three Young Men (you should be able to guess its general contents!), Susannah is the account of a virtuous woman trapped by some lustful rogues and rescued by the wisdom of Daniel, and Bel and the Dragon is an account of another deliverance of Daniel in a lion situation. Probably early AD period.

1 Maccabees is a very good account of the Maccabean war (165 BC) while 2 Maccabees continues that general account. 3 Maccabees takes up the lives of the Jews in Egypt and 4 Maccabees is a rather philosophical account of Jewish faith and ethics.

Sorry to be so terse but that is the price one pays in a very general course.